

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-11 (canceled).

Claim 12 (new): An apparatus for permitting or preventing the flow of gas to a burner having a cooking grill, comprising:

- a. a valve having an open and shut position and biased in said shut position;
- b. a pivot proximate to said valve;
- b. a plunger proximate to said pivot for operating said valve;
- c. a valve actuator arm connected to said pivot and in operative contact with said plunger for moving said plunger, wherein said valve actuator arm extends toward the burner;
- d. an actuator member having a first position and a second position and connected to said valve actuator arm, wherein said actuator member comprises a substantially flat surface for receiving a cooking utensil;
- e. wherein movement of said actuator member moves said valve actuator arm to actuate said plunger and operate said valve.

Claim 13 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member is inclined in said first position.

Claim 14 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member is substantially horizontal in said second position.

Claim 15 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member contacts the cooking grill in said second position.

Claim 16 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein downward movement of said actuator member moves said valve actuator arm to actuate said plunger and open said valve.

Claim 17 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member comprises a substantially circular ring for receiving the cooking utensil.

Claim 18 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said valve is laterally separated from the burner.

Claim 19 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, further including a spring in contact with said valve actuator arm for biasing said valve actuator arm away from said plunger.

Claim 20 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said plunger is biased away from said valve.

Claim 21 (new): The apparatus of Claim 12, where said valve actuator arm extends beneath the burner.

Claim 22 (new): A method for permitting and preventing the flow of gas to a burner of a gas grill comprising:

- a. providing a valve having an open and shut position with a plunger for actuating said valve;
- b. biasing said valve in said shut position;
- c. connecting a valve actuator arm to said plunger;
- d. connecting an actuator member to said valve actuator arm;
- e. inclining said actuator member for receiving a cooking utensil;
- f. permitting the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is placed on said actuator member; and

- g. preventing the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is removed from said actuator member.

Claim 23 (new): The method of Claim 22, further including moving said actuator member downward to permit the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 24 (new): The method of Claim 22, further including locating said valve laterally separate from the burner.

Claim 25 (new): The method of Claim 22, further including biasing said plunger away from said valve.

Claim 26 (new): A method for permitting and preventing the flow of gas to a burner of a gas grill comprising:

- a. providing a valve having an open and shut position with a plunger for actuating said valve;
- b. biasing said valve in said shut position;
- c. connecting a valve actuator arm to said plunger;
- d. connecting an actuator member having a substantially flat surface to said valve actuator arm;
- e. permitting the flow of gas to the burner when a cooking utensil is placed on said actuator member; and
- f. preventing the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is removed from said actuator member.

Claim 27 (new): The method of Claim 26, further including inclining said actuator member for receiving the cooking utensil.

Claim 28 (new): The method of Claim 26, further including moving said actuator member downward to permit the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 29 (new): The method of Claim 26, further including moving said actuator member upward to prevent the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 30 (new): The method of Claim 26, further including locating said valve laterally separate from the burner.

Claim 31 (new): The method of Claim 26, further including biasing said plunger away from said valve.